

Remarks

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for forwarding the initialed form PTO-1449 in this application.

Claims 23-26 are indicated to recite allowable subject matter. Applicants appreciate the recognition of patentable subject matter in the present application.

Applicants hereby add new claim 27 and cancel claims 22-24 and 26. Accordingly, claims 1-21, 25, and 27 are pending in the present application.

Claims 1-4, 7-12, 15-18, and 21-22 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) for obviousness over U.S. Patent No 4,167,322 to Yano et al. in view of U.S. Patent No 6,023,593 to Tomidokoro. Claims 5-6, 13-14, and 19-20 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) for obviousness over Yano et al. in view of Tomidokoro and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,108,099 to Ohtani.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and urge allowance of the present application.

Claim 1 includes the limitations of claim 23. Claim 1 is believed to be allowable in view of the indication in the Office Action that claim 23 recites allowable subject matter.

The claims which depend from independent claim 1 are in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed above with respect to the independent claim as well as for their own respective features which are neither shown nor suggested by the cited art.

Claim 8 includes the limitations of claim 24. Claim 8 is believed to be allowable in view of the indication in the Office Action that claim 24 recites allowable subject matter.

The claims which depend from independent claim 8 are in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed above with respect to the independent claim as well as for their own respective features which are neither shown nor suggested by the cited art.

Claim 16 includes the limitations of claim 26. Claim 16 is believed to be allowable in view of the indication in the Office Action that claim 26 recites allowable subject matter.

The claims which depend from independent claim 16 are in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed above with respect to the independent claim as

*Serial No. 09/710,404  
PDNO. 10003221-1  
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well as for their own respective features which are neither shown nor suggested by the cited art.

Applicants hereby add new claim 27 which includes the limitations of previously pending claims 16 and 25. New claim 27 is believed to be allowable in view of the indication in the Office Action that claim 25 recites allowable subject matter.

Applicants respectfully request allowance of all pending claims.

The Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned if the Examiner believes such would facilitate prosecution of the present application. The undersigned is available for telephone consultation at any time during normal business hours (Pacific Time Zone).

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 3/7/05